

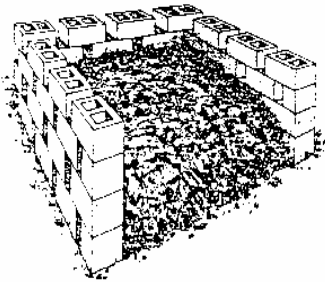


Clallam Conservation District

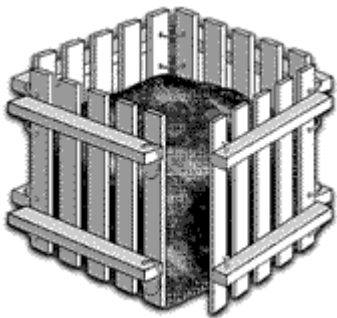
(360) 452-1912 ext. 5

<http://clallam.scc.wa.gov/>

- **Composting is a biological process that utilizes heat, moisture, oxygen, and microbial organisms to decompose plant and animal matter.**
- **This process breaks down raw materials, like manure, into a nutrient rich organic medium.**



Concrete block compost bin.



Wooden pallet compost bin.

COMPOSTING LIVESTOCK MANURE

Composting manure is an excellent management technique for livestock owners. Collecting manure on a daily or semi-regular basis from stalls, paddocks and sacrifice areas has several benefits such as reduces flies and parasite infestations, improves the health of your livestock, reduces the chance of manure runoff contaminating nearby streams, and makes your farm a pleasant place for you and your neighbors. Composting reduces the overall volume/size of your manure pile and the heat generated in the process kills weed seeds and some bacteria. You can apply the nutrient rich compost to pastures, lawns, and gardens. Follow the steps below to get started!

Find a site for your bins- Find a location for your bins away from surface water and near your barn or areas where manure is being removed regularly (make chores as easy as possible).

Bin design & construction- The size and number of bins generally depends on the how many animals you keep and how often the compost can be utilized. Horses generally produce 50 pounds or 0.8 cu/ft of manure per day. Generally, 2 horses will require at least 2 large size bins. Compost bins can be relatively easy and inexpensive to construct, depending on the materials you choose. Concrete blocks, wood pallets, railroad ties and other materials can be used. Contact the Conservation District if you would like sample bin designs or help designing your own composting system.

Carbon/Nitrogen and moisture- The correct carbon to nitrogen ratio, about 25:1, is needed for optimal microbial growth. Manure, mixed with stall bedding such as straw or shavings, is a good start. Monitor the progress of your pile to determine if you need more nitrogen (manure) or more carbon (straw, shavings). You may need to water your compost during the summer to provide enough moisture. Keep the pile covered, especially in the winter. Covering will help retain temperature and moisture.

Turning & Aeration- The pile will need to be occasionally turned to supply oxygen to the center. Adding bulking agents (dry, porous materials) will also help aerate the pile. Inserting PVC pipes drilled with holes will also help move air through the pile.

Utilizing- Your compost is finished when it has an earthy aroma and a crumbly texture. Use the compost on pastures, lawns, and gardens. Share with your neighbors and family if you have an abundance. It's important to plan ahead how your going to use the compost. Sign up for the District's **Manure Share Program** if you are looking for people to share with.



Wood & Wire 3-Bin System.

Wood & Wire Stationary 3-Bin System